

EDITORIAL

Impact factor 0.562 – The ultimate goal or the next step forward?

Fator de impacto de 0,562- um objectivo ou uma etapa?

Last month in June, as usual, Thomson Reuters-ISI Web of Knowledge published the impact factors for all the medical journals included in its listing. The Portuguese Journal of Pulmonology (PJP) received an impact factor (IF) of 0.562, which corresponds to an IF for the third consecutive year (Fig. 1). This is the result of 63 citations in 2012, to be precise, 32 citations from articles published in 2010 and 31 from articles published in 2011, having taken into consideration a total of 112 articles published in those two years by PJP. In addition, in the same year of 2012, a total of 168 citations from articles published in PJP, if all editions are included, can be identified. The level of self citation was 20% which is relatively a low percentage. Both the number of total citations and the citations that contributed to impact factor increased in comparison to previous years. Next year, we anticipate a slight increase in the IF grade, as a result not only from a progressive increase of the number of cites, but also from a stabilization of the number and type of articles published in each number of PJP.¹ As that point in time, we will achieve the natural impact factor of the journal. It is now that we have to question ourselves whether this is our ultimate goal or only a step on the way.

In fact, despite recent developments, PJP is still a Quartile 4 journal with a low profile in the respiratory publishing context. If we, as a society, aim for a progressive rise in IF, there are several changes that we have to make which will

inevitably be the subject for discussion and reflection. If our ambition is to get PJP into Quartile 3, we need to be looking at an IF of something between 1 and 1.5 at the least.

For a start it is important that all the published PJP articles became easier for respiratory physicians and researchers worldwide to consult. Besides an open access, that PJP has been since the beginning, the site is predominantly Portuguese speaking and there has always been a certain difficulty in attracting consultation by non-Portuguese speakers. We have also to cooperate with other societies, namely those closest to us as Brazilian, Spanish or even Latin American in order to promote each PJP edition and the most relevant original papers. Moreover we have to invite international authors who are opinion leaders to write not only editorials, as Felix Herth in the present number², but also revision papers, hoping that these will be followed by leading research groups submitting original papers. An internationalization of the editorial board has also to be addressed. Last but not the least are those essential links to social networks, which all the important journals have to have nowadays; PJP recently joined Twitter and LinkedIn. At the same time we have to speed up the publishing process, which still takes too long, so that the authors feel more rewarded for their hard work. These are only a few ideas, and all the opinions are welcome, but the next step forward means reflecting long and hard on how we would define the real purposes of PJP.

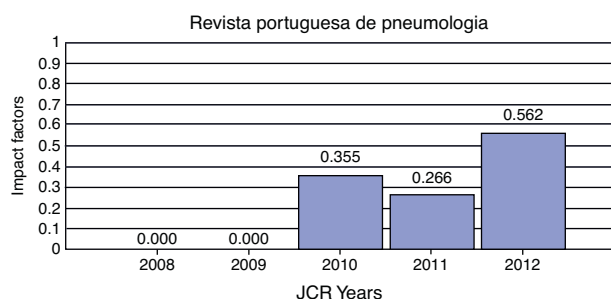


Figure 1 Impact factors.

References

1. Winck JC, Morais A. The ups and downs of the impact factor: "Every cloud has a silver lining". Rev Port Pneumol. 2012;18:153-4.
2. Herth F. Access to the Mediastinum – the standard has changed.

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